2013 Growing Wisconsin Readers Mini-grants

The Public Library Development Team at the Department of Public Instruction will award 40 mini-grants in the amount of $250 to Wisconsin public libraries to support early literacy efforts. This project is part of the larger Growing Wisconsin Readers early literacy initiative. Libraries may apply for grants to establish or enhance *either* an early literacy activity area or a 1000 Books Before Kindergarten program. Priority will be given to libraries that serve a total municipal population of less than 10,000 *and* who serve children birth through age six with potentially limited exposure to early literacy experiences.* Ideally, the grants will be awarded to libraries throughout the state's 17 regional library systems.

Outcomes

Children ages 0-6 will:

- Enjoy library visits
- Have caregivers read and talk with them more often
- Gain essential early literacy skills

Caregivers of children ages 0-6 will:

- Increase awareness of the library as an early literacy resource
- Participate in early literacy activities with their children, both in and outside the library

Timeline

- Monday, June 17, 2013 at 9:00am--The mini-grant online application process opens. All mini-grant applications must be completed online.
- Friday, July 19, 2013 at 4:00pm--The mini-grant online application process closes.
- Thursday, August 1, 2013—Mini-grant winners are notified via email and the grant distribution process begins.
- August, September, October—Mini-grant project work time
- Friday, October 18, 2013—Mini-grant fund spending deadline
- Friday, November 1, 2013—Mini-grant evaluations due (online)

Criteria

1. The library identifies planning that incorporates the Growing Wisconsin Reader mini-grant outcomes into *either* an early literacy activity area or a 1000 Books Before Kindergarten program (see below).
2. The library plans to offer each of the following (all may be new and/or continuing):
   a. Library outreach to daycares/preschools and/or other community programs that relate to early childhood care and education
   b. Partnerships established or continued in the community (individual, nonprofit, governmental agency, and/or business partners/sponsors)
   c. At least 2 examples of community visibility such as print marketing, special event, social media, etc.
3. If a grant recipient, the library confirms that they:
   a. Will secure permission of the library board by August 15, 2013 to accept mini-grant funds
   b. Will use the mini-grant funds to purchase early literacy activity area materials OR print/purchase 1000 Books Before Kindergarten program materials

c. Will use the mini-grant funds by October 18, 2013 and submit a fiscal report form for reimbursement (DUNS Number required**)
d. Will submit photos identifying changes established with the early literacy project
e. Will submit an LSTA mini-grant report online evaluating the early literacy project by Friday, November 1, 2013

Project Information

Libraries may apply for grants to establish or enhance *either* an early literacy activity area or a 1000 Books Before Kindergarten program.

Early Literacy Activity Areas
Early literacy activity areas are spaces in public libraries that are designed to encourage early literacy skill-building through reading, writing, singing, talking, signing, and playing. Early literacy activity areas should target children birth through age six and their caregivers. Early literacy activity areas should emphasize mini-grant outcomes through interactive experiences.

Mini-grant funds can be used to purchase:

- Constructive and imaginative play materials
    - E.g. Puppet theater and rotating basket of puppets
    - E.g. Magnetic letters kit and magnetic trays or wall space
    - E.g. Play food and kitchen/store/restaurant props
- Informational and instructional signage
- Books for children birth through six to use in conjunction with the early literacy activity area
- Furnishings and technology items not allowed

Suggested early literacy activity area resources include:

- Early Literacy Space Planning from Demco (PDF)
- Lakeshore Learning (try shopping by "category" to identify "language" or "dramatic play" items)
- Play Boxes: Mini Playspaces in Your Library
- Early Literacy Environments from Hennepin County (PDF)
- Check out what is happening in your neck of the woods using this Google map of Wisconsin public libraries with early literacy spaces.

1000 Books Before Kindergarten Program
There is no one way or "right" way to run a 1000 Books Before Kindergarten program. Most are homegrown and incorporate ideas from existing programs. Typically, libraries enroll parents of young children in the program and offer a welcome letter and reading logs. Parents incrementally record the number of books read to their young child. Recognition of milestones in the form of library progress posters or other program motivators are often included in programs. For example, a child might get to add a leaf to a paper tree for each 100 book log. There is usually significant recognition when the family reaches the 1000 book goal, ideally by the start of kindergarten.

Mini-grant funds can be used to purchase:

- Paper and office supplies for producing program materials; e.g. letter and reading logs
- Printing costs for program materials; e.g. letter and reading logs
- Program recognition materials and/or program motivators; e.g. "I read 100 books" sticker or printed pass to sit in special chair at storytime program

- Books for children birth through six to use in conjunction with the 1000 Books Before Kindergarten program

Suggested early literacy activity area resources include:

- 1000 Books Before Kindergarten summary from the Colorado State Library (PDF)
- Let 1000 Books Bloom webinar by Marge Loch-Wouters via the South Central Library System
- Additional 1000 Books resources from Marge Loch-Wouters' blog "Tiny Tips for Library Fun"
- Check out what is happening in your neck of the woods using this Google map to identify Wisconsin public libraries with 1000 Books Before Kindergarten programs
- Growing Wisconsin Readers 1000 Books Before Kindergarten template (PDF)

Application

Applications must be completed online and submitted by Friday, July 12, 2013 at 4:00pm. Apply online at
https://forms.dpi.wi.gov/se.ashx?s=56301B2D244BAC2B

For additional information:

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*Children birth through age six with potentially limited exposure to early literacy experiences can be identified as:

- Children cared for at facilities with 1, 2, 3 YoungStar tier ratings. (To find a child care provider, simply search the Department of Children & Families Child Care Search. You can choose to review only YoungStar providers or to search all regulated providers, which includes both those in YoungStar and those that are not.)
- Children cared for at clinics participating in Reach Out and Read. (View a map of participating Reach Out and Read Wisconsin clinics and clinics in application.)
- Children in counties or districts with a significant percentage of public school students eligible for free or reduced-price school meals.

**Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number: All LSTA grant applicants must have an applicant-specific (library or library system) nine-digit DUNS number; i.e., municipality or friends group DUNS numbers cannot be used. If your public library or system does not have a DUNS number, you must obtain one from the federal government. Your library director should know if your library already has a DUNS number. If you are unsure if you have one or need to establish one, follow the directions online. Securing a DUNS number is a free, one-time process that can be accomplished in 5-10 minutes by phone (see fsd.gov/app/answers/rdetail/a_id/184). You can also try applying online at http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/pages/CCRSearch.jsp. Lastly, if you do not have your DUNS number by the mini-grant application deadline, use "999999999" (nine nines) in the application.   If your application is selected, you must secure your DUNS number by August 1, 2013.

Thanks to Beth Crist and the Colorado State Library for information and inspiration from their mini-grant project.